

IN HONOR AND IN MEMORY OF
SERGEANT FOSTER L. HARRINGTON OF MOBILE, ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2004

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, just over one week ago, the First Congressional District of Alabama and indeed, our entire State and Nation, said goodbye to another casualty of the war in Iraq.

Marine Sergeant Foster L. Harrington, a native of New York and longtime resident of Fort Worth, Texas, moved to Mobile, Alabama 18 months ago. Twelve years ago, he had joined the Marine Corps Reserve and was most recently assigned to an elite reserve unit, the 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company, based in Mobile.

In June of this year, Sergeant Harrington's unit was activated and, following a pre-deployment stop in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, was sent to Iraq. His company was stationed in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq and it was in that region that, on September 20, 2004, the unit came into contact with members of the Iraqi insurgency. During an exchange of fire between the company and the insurgents, Sergeant Harrington was killed.

During his career in the Marine Corps Reserve, Sergeant Harrington set a standard of excellence and displayed the qualities of discipline, devotion, and dedication to country that are the hallmarks of men and women throughout the long and distinguished history of the American military.

Sergeant Harrington also displayed an active and deep concern for his neighbors in the Mobile area, serving as a firefighter and medic with the Seven Hills Volunteer Fire Department prior to his deployment to Iraq. A telling story of his concern for others came just days before he died. Even with the difficult situation he and his comrades were facing in Iraq, Sergeant Harrington's first concern was for his many friends and colleagues in the Mobile area who were awaiting the arrival of Hurricane Ivan. For several days prior to his death, including the Sunday before the attack which claimed his life, Sergeant Harrington telephoned his fiancée to check on her and her family and made sure they were out of harm's way.

It is appropriate for us to pause and give thanks to God that there are still young men like Foster L. Harrington. His life and actions personified the very best America has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, as you can imagine, south Alabama is truly mourning the loss of this fine young man. I urge my colleagues to take a moment and pay tribute to Sergeant Foster L. Harrington and his selfless devotion to not only our country and the freedom we enjoy, but to a people who are but now in the infant stages of a new life—a new freedom—in their own land.

We should also remember his fiancée, Fran Poston, and his many friends and colleagues in Mobile, Alabama. Our prayer is that God will give them all the strength and courage that only He can provide to sustain them during the difficult days ahead.

TRIBUTE TO PANAGIOTIS TAKIS
DADIOTIS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2004

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the extraordinary life and notable accomplishments of Panagiotis Takis Dadiotis. This remarkable gentleman merits both our recognition and esteem as his community leadership and invaluable service have unproved the lives of our people.

Taki Dadiotis was born in Greece in the town of Aegion where, in his early years, he worked with his father, a fruit vendor. His story is not unlike those of other Greek Americans who came to this country with little more than their optimism and a desire to build a better life. Taki arrived in the United States in 1966 and first lived in Pensacola, Florida, where he sold toothbrushes door-to-door to raise the fare to travel to Denver. When he arrived, he worked three jobs at the same time—at Samsonite making suitcases, at King Soopers bagging groceries and tending bar at the Picadilly Restaurant—to build the nest egg needed to open his first restaurant with his brothers Sam and Pete. He became a proud family man, and he and his wife Vasiliki, raised two wonderful children, Jim and Theoni.

More restaurants followed including the well-known Greek Town Cafe on East Colfax. But Taki had a passion for politics and always found time to be involved in public life. His restaurant became a gathering place for elected officials and influential politicians as well as the site for countless State, local and national fundraising events. Taki had an irrepressible zest for life and no one was a stranger. He was open and genuine and possessed a refreshing lack of artifice. When people would try to put one over on him, he would simply mention that although he lacked a formal higher education, he did, in fact, graduate from the "University of Colfax" and they all got the drift.

Taki was immensely proud of his Greek heritage and preserving the ideals and traditions of Hellenism had great meaning for him. He understood that his native Hellas and his adopted homeland shared common values and that the greatness of America flowed from our fidelity to the Hellenic precept that government derives its authority from the people. Becoming a citizen of the United States was one of the greatest honors of Taki's life. His son Jim recalled how he instilled in his children a sense of civic responsibility and the fundamental importance of voting. Taki once remarked that America stands for the fair treatment of all people, and that providing the opportunity to be successful makes our country better and stronger. Taki loved this country and he wanted to participate in the American experience. He wanted to help make our country better because it gave him the opportunity to live the American Dream.

But Taki never forgot who he was or where he came from. And although he achieved financial success, he always wanted to help, not only Greek immigrants, but all those who were disadvantaged. He didn't want people that were somehow limited or didn't have access to civic leaders and community resources to be forgotten, left out or lost in the shuffle. Taki not only had a big heart, but he was well-

grounded and possessed a clear sense of what mattered.

Taki Dadiotis loved his family, his friends his country, his faith and lived a life that is rich in consequence. Truly, we are all diminished by the passing of this remarkable person. There is an old Greek saying that "the passion for freedom never dies." And while Taki has left our ranks, his passion for the American ideal endures in us. Please join me in paying tribute to the life of Panagiotis Takis Dadiotis, a distinguished citizen. It is the values, leadership and commitment he exhibited during his life that serves to build a better future for all Americans.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4200, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2004

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Motion to Instruct Conferees on the FY05 National Defense Authorization Act.

There are many reasons to oppose this Motion.

First, the argument could certainly be made that "hate crimes" do not belong on a National Defense Authorization bill. This is incredibly important legislation, and it does not deserve to get bogged down over such a controversial and non-germane provision.

I also oppose the notion of "hate crimes" in general, especially at the federal level. The fact of the matter is that a crime is a crime no matter what motivates it. If two men are brutally murdered, one for his race and the other for his money, are we telling the latter's family that their father's death, or their husband's death, or their son's death, is somehow worth less in the eyes of the law?

I would also contend that the very concept of "hate crimes" is divisive and tends to Balkanize America. During the Civil Rights movement, black Americans strove to be treated the same as white Americans. Theirs was a noble cause. Yet "hate crimes" betray the cause of those who fought against segregation by emphasizing our differences, rather than our common concerns.

I am also concerned that if we have laws which punish more severely offenders who are motivated by certain beliefs, it increases the risk that we will try to criminalize the actual beliefs themselves.

There is no need for "hate crime" legislation. Federal "hate crimes" prosecute property crimes, assault and battery and murder against the special victims. Yet all of these underlying offenses are already illegal in all 50 states and they are already prosecuted by the states with great effectiveness. I am not aware of any of these types of offenses being inadequately investigated or negligently prosecuted. And let's face it: few criminals are likely to be deterred by an additional penalty for a crime that is already unlawful.

Another reason why I oppose federal hate crimes in general and this Motion specifically is because the prosecution of crimes has